



City of Alexandria, VA

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eNews

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City of Alexandria Searches for Poet Laureate

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News Highlights

- City of Alexandria's Office of the Arts Searches for Poet Laureate
- Nominations due on Monday, January 11, 2010

More Information

- www.AlexandriaCommissionForTheArts.org
- www.alexandriava.gov/arts

The City of Alexandria Office of the Arts is issuing a call for applications to serve as the City's Poet Laureate. The Poet Laureate fosters an appreciation of poetry as an art form, encourages creative writing and reading, and promotes literacy through poetry. The Poet Laureate is appointed to a three-year term and receives a modest honorarium.

Individuals can nominate themselves or be nominated by someone else. Nominees must distinguish themselves in the field of poetry through the body of work they have created; be a resident of the City for a minimum of one year and maintain residency through the three-year term of service; accept the Poet Laureate post as a ceremonial role, which includes presentations of work appropriate for all audiences; and be 18 years of age or older. All nominations must be submitted to the Office of the Arts, 1605 Cameron Street, Alexandria, VA, by 5 pm on Monday, January 11, 2010. The new Poet Laureate will be named in March 2010.

The City's current Poet Laureate, Mary McElveen, was appointed in April, 2007 as the unanimous recommendation of a selection committee representing the residents of Alexandria. Since that time, she has been active in the community, visiting schools, teaching poetry classes, creating and reading poems for City events, and bringing her love of poetry to many other places and events. Her appointment has inspired interest in Poet Laureate programs in several other communities, including Fairfax County, VA and Santa Clara County, CA, which recently appointed a Poet Laureate. Mary also has worked with Office of the Arts to involve businesses, civic associations, libraries, schools, recreation centers, and community residents in National Poetry Month and "Poem in Your Pocket Day" activities.

Prior to McElveen's appointment, Jean Elliott, a 78-year-old Alexandria resident, was the first and only Poet Laureate of record for the City. The Alexandria City Council appointed Elliot Poet in Residence and honored her by placing a plaque on her South Fairfax Street home in 1979. She passed away in 1999.

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts is celebrating its 25th anniversary. The Commission and the Office of the Arts, a division of the Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities, work together to promote and cultivate the arts in the City of Alexandria. For more information, please visit their web sites at www.alexandriacommissionforthearts.org and www.alexandriava.gov/arts.